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Black Keys and White: Some Simple Melodies

Nora Archibald Smith

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BLACK KEYS AND WHITE



Some Simple Melodies

As played by

NORA ARCHIBALD SMITH



YRASBL
BNIAM TOVIMU

PRIVATELY PRINTED BY
NORA ARCHIBALD SMITH
1928

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Black Keys and White

Black keys alone
Were all too monotone;
And white alone would be
Imperfect harmony;
Then give us black and white
For music's full delight.

Dedication

Here's a shake of the hand, old friend!
Still it's warm, though it comes, old friend,
 Over leagues of land and sea,
 Over years of time to thee;
'Tis a touch from the past, old friend.

Hold it fast, hold it close, old friend;
Only so will it bless, old friend;
 For I deem it very truth,
 Only friendships made in youth
Can give warmth to the heart, old friend.

A Little Christmas Music

Evergreen

Deep in the snows, heaped to his lowest branches,
Lonely and tranquil stands the lofty fir,
Slowly, with silent alchemy, distilling
Odors of musk, of frankincense and myrrh;
Dusky his plumes, in solemn cadence waving,
Timed to the music that the north wind brings;
Strong is his heart, in quiet courage braving
What may befall of winter's darts and stings.

Heavenward pointing with his shining fingers,
Wearing his garb of everlasting green,
So is he monarch over all the woodland,
Sovereign in soul and sovereign in mien.
Fir-tree of song, of legend, and of story,
Come to our dwellings with thy fragrant breath;
Teach us thy lore, the secret of thy glory,
By endless growth to triumph over death!

Neighbours of the Christ-Night

*Remember, little dearest one,
The beasts on Christmas Day,
And give to each his bite and sup,
To each his meed of hay.
For so it was on the Christ-Night.*

Deep in the shelter of the cave,
The ass with drooping head
Stood weary in the shadow, where
His master's hand had led.
About the manger oxen lay,
Bending a wide-eyed gaze
Upon the little new-born Babe,
Half worship, half amaze.
High in the roof the doves were set,
And cooed there, soft and mild,
Yet not so sweet as, in the hay,
The Mother to her Child.
The gentle cows breathed fragrant breath
To keep Babe Jesus, warm,
While loud and clear, o'er hill and dale,
The cocks crowed, "Christ is born!"
Out in the fields, beneath the stars,
The young lambs sleeping lay,
And dreamed that in the manger slept,
Another, white as they.

These were Thy neighbors, Christmas Child;
To Thee their love was given,
For in Thy baby face there shone
The wonder-light of Heaven.

The Christ-Candle

(A Song for Christmas Eve)

I

'Tis Holy Night in the hamlet olden,
Darkness lowers her curtain down;
With fingers of sleep the eyes are holden,
Naught is awake in the dreaming town.
Shineth one light in a cottage window,
Set for the Christ-child's tender feet,
Lest that they stumble, lest that they falter,
Passing tonight through the silent street.

Shine, sweet light, from thy humble dwelling,
Brightly beam on the toilsome way.
Long must he journey—the darling Christ-child—
Far and far has he still to stray.

II

The world is asleep and the world is weary,
Scarce it remembers the Holy Night;
Error and wretchedness, sinful, dreary,
Cover and darken the spirit-sight.
Stay not to come to us, blessed Christ-child,
Though we be slumbering, though we forget,
Though they be scanty, the lights that await thee,
Heavenly Messenger, stay not yet!

Here is my light in my true heart's window,
Angel of Christmastide, come to me;
If thou wilt enter so lowly a chamber,
Here shall thy home and thy shelter be.

The Rose of Mary

(A Christmas Legend)

The roses red in Paradise,
The roses ermine-white,
They bloom like glittering jewels set
In a frame of chrysolite.

So magic-sweet their fragrance,
All other scents above,
Small wonder angels call them
The flower and crown of Love.

But twice has mortal vision—
So runs the ancient tale—
Been suffered to behold them,
Their odor to inhale.

Once,—'twas when Eve was banished
From Eden's garden fair,
And fearful, tearful, sorrowful,
She fled in her despair.

'Twas then a pitying angel
Clasped in her hand a rose,
As symbol of the love divine
For every sin that flows.

Twice,—'twas in sacred Bethlehem,
Upon the Holy Night,
When all about the manger-bed
They blossomed red and white.

Sweet Mary had no birthday gift
Love's cradle to adorn;
So holy angels wafted down
A branch of rose and thorn.

She caught it in her blessed hands;
All glorious grew the room;
And wond'ring beasts looked on and saw
The rose of Mary bloom.

L'Oiseau de Dieu
(*Legend of Normandy*)

When sweet Babe Jesus sleeping lay
And shivered with the cold,
The wee brown wren took thought to Him,
Her down she plucked and brought to Him,
Enwrapped Him, fold on fold.

When sweet Babe Jesus craved a robe,
A-couching in the hay,
Her own warm plumes she laid on Him,
A feathered garb she made on Him,
That blessed Christmas Day.

Babe Jesus lacked a coverlet;
The rude wind stole within;
The wren brought leaves and spread on Him,
Russet and gold she shed on Him,
And lapped Him softly in.

Dear bird of brown, thou tender-heart,
Thou gav'st the Babe thine all!
To praise thee is most meet to us,
Thy pitying deeds are sweet to us,
God's blessing on thee fall!

The Compassion of the Swallows

(A Galician Legend)

O happy house and fortunate, however poor it be,
Beneath whose eaves the swallows build and dwell
there trustingly!
Those gracious birds, compassionate all other birds
above,
Who learned to know the Master's face and sunned
them in his love.

That day of dread on Calvary they lingered round
the mount,
Each pitying heart aflame for Him whose heart was
Pity's fount.
Naught might they comfort, naught avail, the woe-
ful deed was done;
Yet, fleet of wing, they circled there, till bleeding, set
the sun.

Ere darkness fell upon the Cross and on the Crucified,
The swallows spied the crown of thorns that beaute-
ous head beside;
Swift as the light they sped to aid, and till the Sab-
bath morn
With tender beak they plucked them forth, each
sharp and piercing thorn.

Forget not, when the swallows dart across the twi-
light sky,
A flash of feathers down the dusk, a shadow passing
by,
Forget not from whose wounded brow they caught
the grievous thorn,
And bless them when they build their homes thy
rooftree to adorn.

The Christmas Carol of the Bees

(An Old English Superstition)

'Tis Christmas Eve in an Old World garden,
An English garden of long ago,
And down in the dusk of the privet hedges
The beehives stand in a goodly row.
Still is each trim little conical dwelling,
Still are the delicate wings below;
Hardly the wind dares venture a whisper
Over the beds where the flowers grow.

*Still, still, garden and field and hill,
Waiting the radiant Christmas morn,
Waiting the heav'nly morn.*

Midnight strikes from the ivied tower,—
Hark, what a clamor the tolling brings!
Bells in the distance joyfully answer;
Earth, rejoicing, an anthem sings.
Down where the honey-bees cling and cluster,
Buzzing, humming, a carol rings—
"Christ is born!" so the golden chorus;
"Praise Him! ye that have voice and wings!"

*Sing, sing, ye that have voice and wing.
Sing, for the Sun of the World is born,
Sing, for the Christ is born!*

The Touch Divine

The Christ-Child by the river's brink,
 'Mongst other babes at play,
Took water from the lapping wave
 And deftly molded clay.
Sparrows He fashioned, mourning doves,
 The lark, the crested jay,
And ever, as He loosed His hold,
 They swiftly sped away.

While yet they held nor hue nor shape,
 An impulse seemed to rise
Within their cold and earthy breasts
 To urge them to the skies.
Scarce could they wait the final touch;
 Straight as the arrow flies,
Upward they wing'd to azure heights,
 As vying for a prize.

Christ-Child, our thoughts are like the stone,
 Where vine nor brier clings;
Our hearts are empty as the nest
 Where no bird sits and sings;
Our deeds are idle as the spray
 The reckless fountain flings.
Lay on our lives Thy touch divine,
 Transform us, grant us wings!

In the Winter Corn

"If one walks in the winter corn on Holy Christmas Eve,
he will hear all that will happen in the village that year."

—*Old German Superstition.*

Into the winter corn she went,
 On Holy Christmas Eve;
She listened to the leaves down-bent,
Into the winter corn she went,
She heard a message heaven-sent—
 Joy she could scarce believe;
Into the winter corn she went,
 On Holy Christmas Eve.

All softly rustling sighed the corn,
 About her ragged dress;
Bare were her feet as babe new-born,
All softly rustling sighed the corn,
She longed to beg of Love his thorn,
 Deep in her heart to press;
All softly rustling sighed the corn,
 About her ragged dress.

"Oh, what shall be my lover's eyes,
 And what shall be his face?
Give me, O corn, thine answer wise!
Oh, what shall be my lover's eyes?
And how may he a maiden prize,
 Of poverty so base?
Oh, what shall be my lover's eyes,
 And what shall be his face?"

Thro' all the corn a shiver ran,
A hush fell on the night.
A tremulous whisper straight began,
Thro' all the corn a shiver ran,
"He'll hold thee dear as lover can,
And fair be, in thy sight."
Thro' all the corn a shiver ran,
A hush fell on the night.

On Christmas Eve this thing befell,
The winter corn among;
The maid herself the tale did tell,
On Christmas Eve this thing befell;
On Easter day her wedding bell
Rang out with joyful tongue.
On Christmas Eve this thing befell
The winter corn among.

Lost Loves

Where are the lilies that swayed and bloomed
In the garden that summer day?
Tell me, thou Christ-child, Lily of God,
Where have they passed away?

*In Paradise fair
They blossom rare;
Never more shall they feel the wintry air;
And the Tree of Life is their shading-tree.*

Where are the doves with the rose-red eyes,
That cooed in the wood at night?
Tell me, thou Christ-child, Dove of the World,
Where have they taken flight?

*No net is spread,
No shaft is sped
In celestial groves where they seek their bread,
And the Tree of Life is their nesting-tree.*

Where are the fleecy, snow-white lambs
That once in the grasses played?
Tell me, thou Christ-child, Heavenly Lamb,
Where are their dear heads laid?

*Of immortal sheen
Are their meadows green;
Clear fountains of water flow between;
And the Tree of Life is their shelt'ring-tree.*

Where are the little ones, dimpled and soft,—
The lost ones we loved so well?
Where are their voices, the sound of their feet?—
Pitying Christ-child, tell!

*In Heaven's own hall
They are gather'd all,
With the morning stars for their tapers tall;
And the Tree of Life is their Christmas-tree.*

A Medley of Tunes
Grave and Gay

Memory-Land

Oh, what's the way to Memory-Land?

I fear I've quite forgot.

I peer through mists of vanished years,

But no remember'd spot

Reminds me of the well-worn way

That leads to yester-year;

I glimpse no old familiar turn,

No crossroads, far or near.

Oh, what's the way to Memory-Land?

It cannot be that I,

But yesterday a little child,

Have lost the bit of sky

That bent above my father's house,

The arching elms below;

It cannot be no sign or guide

Can tell me where to go!

Oh, what's the way to Memory-Land?

I seek each path and lane,

The orchard near the vanished home,

The sunset window-pane.

I turn my gaze within my breast,

And there, the world apart,

I find the way to Memory-Land,

Close-hid—within my heart!

The Feet of the Children

(1917)

In far Arabia they tell the tale—

A wondrous tale, e'en in the home of wonders—

Of that great magic-worker, whose fine ear,

Held to the ground in any desert's core,

Yet could detect on Bagdad's stony ways

The pattering of little children's feet

And hear their laughter and their frolicking.

A wondrous tale indeed; yet stranger still,

In this new land that never held enchantment,

Day after day the miracle is wrought again.

No woman's ear that is not pressed to earth

Each morn she wakens, while with anguished heart

She hears the echoing of children's feet,

Bare feet and wayworn, in the wilderness.

Oh, little feet in Flanders and in France;

Strayed feet in Belgium's vast orphanage;

Feet that have never sinned and yet must bleed

In Germany's stark homes and swollen graveyards;

Small feet of woe in Russia's cruel snows;

Armenian feet and Polish, Serb and Austrian,

We hear your terror in your pattering.

We may not bear the load of anguish more;

Each step falls like a weight of iron down.

We feel the frozen touch, the icy chill,

Of flesh that life may never warm again.

Oh, feet unsheltered from the wintry blast,

Dear feet that never walked unaccompanied,

God send you safely into paradise!

Dusk and Solitude

Oh, to him who bears a heavy heart all day,—
Heavy and stark as some dead mariner
In canvas sewn and with shot weighted,—
To such an one what longed-for rest may come
With slow approach of evening and the time
When solitude may claim him for her own!
What philtre magical for gnawing pain,
What solace for a wound unspeakable,
To be alone a space and doff the smile
That served as masking for the countenance,
To sigh at will, to let the tear-drops fall
And plunge, unheard, in depths of misery!
The lights put out, the trappings of the day
Laid off, like outworn chrysalids,
The spirit casts itself, with struggle spent,
Into the waters of the midnight deep,
Content to sink, to drown, to be engulfed,
So that it sinks alone, unaccompanied.
No juice of poppy, mandragore, or hemp,
Yielding the body's hurt a brief oblivion,
Can rival, potent howsoe'er they be,
The balm to spirit-woe of solitude.

Fallen Leaves

My heart is a pool in an autumn wood
Where fallen leaves are lying,
Crimson and golden, bronze and green,
One hue with the other vying.
No matter how dark the lonely pool,
Still can it give reflection;
Mirrored the fallen glories lie,
Shadows of recollection.

Like to the pool the heart may fail,
Slowly, in dim seclusion,
Lacking the flow of a hidden spring,
Lacking the brook's profusion.
Yet, as the leaves fall darkling down,
Still may they feed and nourish,
Still may the memories serve as soil
Wherein new heart-blooms flourish.

The Hearth Fire

(Tibi splendet focus)

Know'st thou a hearth-stone, warm and safe,
A hearth-fire burning bright,
Where housemates sit in sweet content,
Ringed round with peace tonight?

Know'st thou a mother, star-like, set
In azure deeps of love;
Whose radiance dims all earthly lights,
Clear-shining from above?

Hast never known them? In thine heart
Still fair the vision lies
And thou canst close thine eyes and see
The Isle of Paradise.

Remote or near, its fragrance breathes
On every wind that blows,
And over the width of half the world
For thee the hearth-fire glows!

Verses for Lighting the Fire

(Wheelock School Dedication, November 3, 1914)

As we lay the logs on the fire
And they swiftly flame and expire,
 An incense rises
 That half surprises
The sense with its fragrance rare.

'Tis an odor of fluttering leaves,
An aroma of ripening sheaves,
 A bird's clear singing,
 A wind-harp swinging,
The rush of the rain through the air.

As we lay our gifts on this altar,
With devotion that never can falter,
 A love unending,
 A faith unbending,
Whate'er 'tis our lot to bear,

Aloft from the crimson flaming,
A perfume arises, shaming
 The honeyed clover
 That bees hang over,
The bloom of a garden fair.

'Tis the censer of Memory swings it,
The wind of the Past that brings it;
 Its volume swelling
 Will bless this dwelling,
'Twill bring it the peace of prayer.

Everybody's Baby

Pray, where does the bonniest baby dwell,
The sweetest that ever did grow?
Say, where shall I find it, now truthfully tell,
Please show me the way I must go.

*The bonniest baby that ever did grow,
Without a "perhaps," or a "maybe,"
It is hers, it is mine, it is his, it is thine;
Oh, it's everybody's baby!*

But choices in babies there surely must be,
Though all may be charming and pretty;
The fairest, the rarest, the dearest of all,
Must needs be the theme of my ditty.

*The very same story I can but repeat,
Without a "perhaps," or a "maybe,"
It is hers, it is mine, it is his, it is thine;
Oh, it's everybody's baby!*

There isn't a baby on earth, you maintain,
That isn't a duck and a treasure,
A beauty, a jewel, a poppet, a pet,
The life of the house and its pleasure?

*I stoutly maintain it; I state it again,
Without a "perhaps," or a "maybe,"
It is hers, it is mine, it is his, it is thine;
Oh, it's everybody's baby!*

A Child Picture

A crowded car, a neglectful nurse
Who felt for her charge indif'rence or worse;
The child beside her, a wee, fair lad,
With a face to have made an artist glad;
A rose-pink cheek and an eye so blue,
A gentian alone could have matched its hue,
While the gentian fringes all might see
As he bent to the basket upon his knee.
He lifted the cover, a moment glanced,
And the gentian eyes with gladness danced, * * *
And then he smiled, as the seraphs do
When their Lord has granted a joy that's new.

* * * *

The prize in the basket? Ah, who can say!
A pinch of star-dust? A moonlit ray?
The gold of Ophir? A Doge's ring?
An angel's chaplet? A fairy's wing?
Whatever it was, you'd have given a crown
For the smile 'neath those lashes, sweeping down!

Life's Pendulum

Like the swing of a pendulum to and fro,
Is the beat of the days between joy and woe.

Joy once gotten

Is soon forgotten.

Gotten! Forgotten!

Forgotten! Gotten!

To and fro,

To and fro.

Like the lap of waves on a silver beach,

A forward urging, a backward reach,

Joy cometh sweetly,

Woe flies as featly.

Gotten! Forgotten!

Forgotten! Gotten!

To and fro,

To and fro.

Like the leaf on the tree, now bending down,

Now whirling up to the tossing crown,

So comes joy ever,

So woe doth sever.

Gotten! Forgotten!

Forgotten! Gotten!

To and fro,

To and fro.

So let Woe come, so let Joy go,

As sways the pendulum, swift or slow.

The clock stays never,

It beats forever.

Gotten! Forgotten!

Forgotten! Gotten!

To and fro,

To and fro.

Immune

As a lone pine-tree that the winter blast
Has shorn of leaf and limb and branches' tracery,—
As a bleak rock, swept bare of flower and fern
And all that made its summer witchery,—
So stand I to the storm, bereft of all
That made life's summer and its blossoming;
A broken shaft, where no birds build
Nor vine can venture its encompassing.

Let whirlwinds blow: What boughs have I to break?
Let lightnings flash: I hold the victory!
Not summer's burning sun, nor winter's frost,
Can bow my head nor pierce my panoply.
A dying root, a wither'd bough, a sapless trunk,—
These are fit emblems of my poverty;
And, since who all has lost can take no harm,
Immune am I from all adversity!

Love's Young Dream

What is Love? What is first Love?
None but the poet knows, or if he knows, can tell it;
Softer than swan's down, or the swallow's throat,
Swift as the firefly, as sudden flickering;
Crystalline is it, as the tears of joy
That come like sunshine after sudden rain;
Vibrant with gladness as the robin's song at dawn;
Sweeter than honey sipped from meadow-blooms,
Or than the sap that drips from maples in the spring;
Full of surprise, of charm, of sudden ecstasy;
Fugitive, passing, as the sweep of clouds across a
 summer sky,
Or, as the flash of bright-hued wings in tropic
 solitudes;
Such is Love, such is first Love, blended of sheen and
 fragrance, light and melody.

The Holocaust

Here is the packet, with a ribbon bound,
Blue as the waters of the Golden West,
Or as the skies that arch her dusky canyons.
There were the letters written, in that land
Flower'd like Eden and like Eden changeless.
Open the packet, and the scented breath
Of sun-warmed mignonette and fretted pink,
Of passion-flower and of jasmine greets you.
So may you lift the cover of an Orient jar,
Deep-piled with roses and with spices blent,
And know the odour of a bygone day,—
A wraith from out the past, the ghost of memory.
. . . . See! not a line is faded, not a word is lost;
Strong was the hand that traced the lines,
And stronger still the pow'r that swayed it.
. . . . Now, while the fire leaps high, strew on the
leaves,
The whispering leaves that tell of lovers' ecstasy.
. . . . Look! where they crumple runs a fiery line
Of throbbing words, alive and passionate,
That sear the pages like a living flame,
. . . . Now the frail paper turns to silent gray;
The ashes fall; the love-light fades away;
Yet not a word was there shall ever die;
Deep in the heart forever shrined they lie.

Let Me In!

There came a little sobbing wind,
Sighing at the crevice of the casement,
Prying at the pane with trembling fingers,
Moaning in the darkness of the night;
Lonely, desolate, afraid, uncomforted,
Shut out from warmth, from light, from company,
Out in the cold, the rain, the silences.

What aileth thee, O wind?
Why dost thou strive to force my casement?
Why dost thou sigh and moan and thus complain?
What wouldst thou have of me, unhappy wind?

"I am shut out, shut out, chilly and comfortless,
From time's creation do I walk apart.
Fire hath a roof, water an abiding,
Light hath a house wherein to dwell;
Only the wind can nowhere find a shelter,
Hapless, aloof, homeless, a-cold and lone!"

Oh, brother wind, well do I know thy story.
I also am uncomforted, alone;
Restless, uneasy, like a dry leaf blowing,
Sighing and moaning at my dear one's window,
Trying her lattice in the gloomy dark.
Like thee, I have no home, no comforting,
Like thee, I shiver in the bitter cold.
Oh, let me in! true love, for love of loving,
No shelter have I save within thy heart!

Town and Country

Oh, the ways in town are merry,
Where the marts of fashion are,
While along the level asphalt
Whirls my lady in her car;
But the country roads are fairer—
Silver ribbons, winding down,
Edged with pink and white of clover,
From the woodland's grassy crown.

Oh, the lights in town are flashing;
Jewels they of burning glare,
Searing tired eyes to blindness,
Blanching all the upper air.
But the country lights are heartsome—
Leaping fire and candle-spark,
Or serenity of star-shine,
Smiling through the friendly dark.

There's a splendid flush of color
On the crowded ways of town,
Blush of chiffon, sheen of satin,
Fruity bloom of velvet gown;
But the daisy's alabaster,
And the flash of bluebird's wing,
And the rose's tender tinting,
More content and joyance bring.

All the city's ways of fashion
Throng with idlers, pleasure-bent,
Avid, eager, wasting daylight,
Fluttering till the night is spent;
But my little rustic ribbon,
Softly colored, summer-drest,
Leads me home before the sunset,
Leaves me with my heart at rest.

The Silent Village

(Tory Hill Graveyard, Buxton, Maine)

The grassy roads lead smooth and straight,
By path and lane bisected;
The passer-by may stroll along,
From traffic quite protected.
No noise is here, no din of toil,
No bustle and no rattle;
Each householder from chat refrains,
And idle tittle-tattle.

Afar, the purple mountains stand,
Their summits sky-enfolded;
Not less remote the silent folk
Whose dwellings here are moulded.
By every lowly door there stands
A signal of possession;
The name is writ, and thus the lips
Of dumbness make confession.

Like frozen memories they stand,
Like statues set in churches,
Yet here in warm encompassment
Of elms and silvern birches.
How calm, how still! The very wind
Goes tiptoe as it passes.
Ah, build me here a quiet house
Deep down among the grasses!

The Spare-Room Bed

"Where are the snows of yester-year?"
Where is the spare-room bed?
Memories both of a bygone day,
Beauty and virtue fled.

Prideful and stately, the spare-room bed
Stood in its ample space,
Conscious of feathers of living geese,
Linen, and hand-made lace.

Intricate coverlets wrapped it round,
Knitted and quilted and sewn;
Propped by its pillows, the visitor looked
Proud as a king on his throne.

Infantile illness might haply attain
Freedom of chamber and bed,
Far from the family hustle and stir,
Toys on the covers spread.

Wedding outfits might shelter there;
There might the old-time bride
Preen all her feathers for mating-day;
There might the veil be tried.

These excepted, the room was dark,
Save when a guest was bid;
Silent it waited its blooming-time,
All of its glories hid.

Where are the visitors? Where are the snows?
Vanished from mortal ken.
Gone is the bed and the welcome it gave;
Who shall revive them again?

The Drawn-In Rug

It lies in the parlor chamber; 'tis long ago since we
 made it,
Lucy and I together,—Lucy who sleeps in the grave-
 yard,
Afar off there in the grasses, under the dusky pine-
 trees.
Nothing of mine is dearer, nothing of hers more
 sacred
Than the wreath of blossoming roses, set in a snowy
 background,
Framed in a dusky banding, an edging of velvet
 blackness.
Only to look at it brings her close to my side, in her
 dearness;
Makes me remember the hours we toiled and we
 sketched and we fashioned.
Baskets of scraps and of shreds we gathered together
 and hoarded,
Careful that nothing should lack to further our plan
 and our purpose.
She was the mistress of color, hers was the hand that
 compounded,
Of bark, and of nuts, and of berries, dyes of a magic-
 al brilliance.
Deftly she dipped all the fragments, turning the dull
 to resplendent.
Then came the cutting and sorting, and then, best of
 all, the designing,

Moment of joy for which all that preceded had been
but a prelude.
Grasping her charcoal, her serious face flushed with
the joy of creation,
Plainly I see her, just as she bent, sketching her
wreath on the canvas.
Mine was the artisan task, corner and background
and border,
Just what was needed to fill out and finish the artist's
endeavor.
Ah, the sweet hours that we spent, pulling our shreds
through the meshes,
Choosing our colours, clipping them close, making
them softer than velvet!
Snowbound and still was the house, wrapped in the
cloak of the winter,
Silent and chill; but within, roses grew under our
fingers.
Softly we talked as we sat, wielding our hooks and
our scissors,
Sheltered and warm and together. Ah, that was all
that I asked for!
What have I now but the grave where Lucy sleeps
under the grasses?
What but the rug with its roses that lies on the floor
of the chamber!

Pumpkin-in-the-Shell

There's a certain charm in cook-books,
And the reader's hunger swells
As he lingers over Grandma's,
And the secrets that it tells.

Grandma's was a portly volume;
Every recipe set down
In her fine Italian writing,
Faded now to leafy brown.

How one's mouth begins to water;
How one longs to taste again
Muster gingerbread and tartlets,
Currant buns and doughnut men!

But one dish described by Grandma,
Never verse its charm could tell;
Never words describe its savor—
It was Pumpkin-in-the-Shell.

Take a pumpkin, golden yellow,
Cut a slice from off the top;
With a spoon scrape out the fiber,
And the seeds for next year's crop.

In the hollow, sprinkle honey;
Fill with milk of long ago,
Not the stuff of modern commerce,
But a milk of creamy flow.

Scatter spices, bear the vessel
To the oven's glowing heat;
Watch and pray and keep the fire
Till the product is complete.

Here it comes, a globe of sunshine!
Lift the cover, smell the spice;
Not a dish on Nero's menus
Ever tasted half so nice!

Lilliput Library

A long, low room aglow with winter sun;
Fair windows fronting on a busy street
Where sights to please the fancy, shifting, pass.
Yet no eye glances through the shining panes;
The world's forgotten here and silence reigns.
Low cases, deftly fitted, line the walls,
Well-stored with many a rare and curious tome
In crimson, purple, blue and mossy-green,
Whose golden-gleaming titles fitly tell
Of all the wondrous treasures they enfold.
In this deep alcove, History holds sway;
Here armies tramp and conquering cannon boom;
Here kingdoms rise and fall and worlds are won.
Yet not less true appear the volumes nigh
That deal with fairy lore and sing of elves,
Of mermaids, giants, dwarfs and magic spells.
There, tales of chivalry, like relics, shrined,
Send forth their beams across the cloistral space
And worshippers adore them, wonder-eyed,
In rev'rence bent to squire, page and knight.
Lean o'er yon broad low table. You shall see
Strange voyages and journeys pictured out
On maps that many a young Columbus views
And many a small explorer longs to trace.

Hark to the song that thrills from out the wall!
'Tis Blondel signaling the Lion-Heart.
Draw nigh and every leaf shall tell its tale
Of stern Crusader and of Paynim foe.

Just here, bold outlaws leap from out the wood,
While arrows whistle by and bows are bent;
And there, fierce pirates grapple to the death,
While blood is running free and ships are sunk.
Quaint pictures, hung for Lilliputian eyes,
Glow in the friendly light and plainly tell
To those whose alphabet is yet unlearned,
Wild tales of Norsemen's galleys, Roman walls,
White saints, vile dragons, kings and haughty queens.
The swarming Lilliputians hither come,—
A studious race, on curious learning bent,
With fleece as gold as Jason's, eyes as bright
As Sindbad's stones in magic valley found,
And in their look a potent witchery
That rules a royal realm without a sword.
Here do they read and here they, waking, dream,
While slowly sinks the sun and twilight falls.
Dream, do we say, and yet 'tis on such dreams
That Life itself may feed when Youth is gone.

In Hospital

The day's a tragedy of waiting, and the night
A swart procession of deep-burdened hours
That stumble tow'rd an appointed goal they ever fail
to reach.
The patient waits the light, a lifetime stretch'd in
torture;
He waits the nurse's footsteps and the long'd-for
meal
Which turns to dust within his mouth as soon as
tasted;
He waits the coming of the doctor, and the while
Hears countless footsteps pass along the echoing halls,
Yet never one that pauses at his door
The visit is delayed, and now a million years have
sped
Since last he look'd upon that sphinx-like face,
Whose eyes, remote and silent, brook no question-
ing
The day writhes on, of python length and ring'd
with fiery pain.
Will Darkness never come and bring her healing
sleep?
And yet when dusk draws on, sleep has removed so
far
That, creeping through eternity, one may not find
her.
Again, the light is waited and the darkness banned.
Again, through daytime hours the Stations of the
Cross are made,
And, amid this waiting, far below the surface of the
conscious self,
A submarine of thought, forever pulsing in a sea of
anguish,
Issues its solemn warning that he waits for naught
but . . . Death!

Morning in the Market

(Williamsburgh Bridge, New York)

Aloft, the ponderous arches of the bridge
Shut out the sky and shed a gloom,
Deep as a Rembrandt background, o'er the scene.
Above is tumult;—sudden beat of hoofs, the whir of
wheels,

Hoarse-throated whistles, bells that answering clang,
And beneath all else, like rote of sea far distant,
The ceaseless monotone of passing feet,
Restless, insurgent as a rising tide.
Dim figures, half perceived amid the haze,
Cross and recross, dart swiftly to and fro,
Like to the flotsam in an eddying pool,
While sulphurous flames, from cressets leaping high,
Brighten and darken, rise and fall again.
Booths flash to light, heaped high with humble
wares,

Ranged and assorted with a jealous care,
Guarded and tended each by servitor devout,
Strong-beaked, swart-tinted, lean, and eager-eyed.
Here shows the silvery sheen of dull-eyed fish,
In cool confusion on each other strewn;
There, the red cheeks of apples and the tawny brown
Of chestnuts, breathing of their forest home.
Here glows the molten gold of oranges, and there
The paler tones of lemons and of limes.
Here bloom the grapes, empurpled, and, beyond,
The cabbage flaunts her varying shades of green,

With lettuce, onions, and the savory leek.
Choice of gay stuffs there lacks not here,—
Chintzes and cottons, gaudy cloths and scarves.
In this far corner, where the torch flares high,
A shimmering row of pots and pans is seen;
And there, above, a mimic garden grows,
Aglow with paper flowers of every hue.
O'er this rough counter, piled with odorous tea,
Weird characters, like magic signs, are writ,
And, weird as they, the merchant of the stall,
White-bearded, prophet-eyed, and gaberdined.
Women, with shawls loose-dropped from ebon locks,
Chaffer and bargain in the crowded mart,
And everywhere a strange rough tongue is heard,
Like to no other that our ears have known,
Kin to the speech that on the Shinar plain,
Confused was heard when Babel's tower arose.

Moving Pictures

Curtains are hanging before mine eyes;
Whiter than ivory are they, softer than velvet,
Fringed with silk fringes like shawls of the Indies,
Drawn with fine cordage to shut out the daylight.
Behind sit I in my lonely self,
Where none but myself can find me,
Audience, owner, producer in one,
Of the pictures that move on the curtains.
Myself did set them, myself did stage them,
Mine is the right to summon them forth,
To bring them from Memory's storehouse;
Mine, too, the right to bid them depart
When the pageant no more entertains me.
Suiting my temper they flash into view,
Comedy, tragedy, whatsoe'er please me;
Idyll of youth, or a drama of age,
Naught does it matter, for all are my making.
Nothing appears on the screen of title, description or
story;
Mine the scenarios, all of my own, and I can supply
the allusions.
Silence surrounds me as silent I sit, watching the flut-
tering motion,
While the picture sinks into its frame, as a sea-gull
alights on the water.
What need is there here of music, of orchestra, singers,
or organ?
My heart knows the melody needed and follows the
beat of the measure—
This is my theatre: never an eye save mine own
Can penetrate back of my curtains.